



Court fight against Georgia voting overhaul no sure thing

By Mark Sherman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Court challenges to Republican-led election restrictions in Georgia and elsewhere face an uncertain road in a legal system that has grown more conservative in recent years.

National legislation favored by Democrats could counteract some state restrictions, but that too is no sure thing in a closely divided Congress.

Groups opposed to Georgia's sweeping overhaul of election laws filed suit in federal court in Atlanta on Thursday, a few hours after Gov. Brian Kemp signed the new law. They say restrictions on voting in person or by mail, including a requirement to have voter identification to cast an

absentee ballot, violate the constitutional rights of all Georgians and also disproportionately affect voters of color in violation of the seminal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Georgia law was enacted less than three months after the state elected two Democrats to the Senate, handing the party control of the chamber. In November, President Joe Biden became the first Democratic presidential candidate to carry the state since 1992.

It is one of a wave of GOP-backed election bills introduced in states around the country after former President Donald Trump stoked false claims that fraud led to his 2020 election defeat.

Continued on next page



FILE - In this Nov. 3, 2020, file photo, a poll worker talks to a voter before they vote on a paper ballot on Election Day in Atlanta. The sweeping rewrite of Georgia's election rules that was signed into law by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp Thursday, March 25, 2021, represents the first big set of changes since former President Donald Trump's repeated, baseless claims of fraud following his presidential loss to Joe Biden. Georgia's new, 98-page law makes numerous changes to how elections will be administered, including a new photo ID requirement for voting absentee by mail.

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FILE - In this Jan. 5, 2021, file photo, voters wait in line to cast their ballots in Georgia's Senate runoff election in Atlanta. The sweeping rewrite of Georgia's election rules that was signed into law by Republican Gov. Brian Kemp Thursday, March 25, 2021, represents the first big set of changes since former President Donald Trump's repeated, baseless claims of fraud following his presidential loss to Joe Biden. Georgia's new, 98-page law makes numerous changes to how elections will be administered, including a new photo ID requirement for voting absentee by mail. (AP Photo/Brynn Anderson, File)

Continued from Front

Georgia became a focus of the election and its aftermath with two recounts and ongoing investigation into whether Trump and his allies acted illegally in their efforts to try to overturn the result.

Stacey Abrams, the 2018 Democratic nominee for governor in Georgia, wrote on Twitter that the new law signaled Republican "capitulation to lies over truth. To fear over fairness. To suppression over participation."

Jason Snead, a conservative supporter of the law, called it "a pretty reasonable set of proposals" that will "continue the tradition of keeping it easy to vote and hard to cheat." Richard Hasen, an election law expert at the University

of California at Irvine law school, said the outcome is hard to predict. "Many of the things that the bill does are in line with what other states already do, so the question is whether a contraction of voting rights for bad purposes is illegal, even if the contraction does not go as far as some other states (or that Georgia considered)," Hasen wrote in an email.

Courts have made it harder to prove intentional racial discrimination, and "a partisan intent, even if it overlaps with race, may well not be enough," Hasen said. State and federal courts, including judges appointed by Trump, widely rejected lawsuits brought by the former president and his supporters challenging the election results.

But Republican-led states have fared better in federal court over other election issues, most notably a ruling last year that forced Florida felons to pay off fines and fees before regaining their right to vote.

In that case, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals divided on ideological lines, with five Trump appointees among the six conservatives in the majority. The Atlanta-based 11th Circuit includes Georgia, and the same court would handle any appeal of a trial court ruling.

The Supreme Court, with three Trump appointees in a 6-3 conservative majority, likely would have the final word on challenges to restrictions in Georgia and elsewhere.

The justices' pending decision in a voting rights case from Arizona involving ballot collection and votes cast in the wrong precincts — two areas also covered in the Georgia law — also could affect the outcome of the Georgia lawsuit, especially if the court waters down a surviving provision of the Voting Rights Act that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race.

"The fate of this lawsuit might really turn on what we learn this spring from the Supreme Court," said Deborah Pearlstein, a constitutional law professor at Yeshiva University's Cardozo law school in New York.

A decision in the Arizona case is expected by late June.

The Supreme Court's last major decision on the voting rights law was in 2013, when the court effectively gutted a key provision that had forced states and local governments with a history of discrimination to get approval before enacting any election-related changes.

The cumulative effect of the 2013 decision and subsequent measures enacted by states "is to really empower states who are interested in limiting voting to do that with more of a hope that they will be able to survive legal challenges," Pearlstein said.

Congress could render the court fight virtually meaningless if it were to pass Democratic proposals that would, among other things, strike down hurdles to voting and revive the advance approval portion of the Voting Rights Act.

"The Constitution gives Congress broad powers to set the rules for conducting federal elections," Hasen said, and constitutional amendments that extended the vote to Black Americans, women and 18-year-olds provide more authority for protecting voting rights. Democrats would almost certainly have to change Senate rules to win approval for the legislation by virtue of the tie-breaking vote of Vice President Kamala Harris.

Court challenges would surely follow, Snead said, although he conceded that some provisions, including rescinding state voter ID requirements probably would survive. □

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New York lawmakers agree to legalize recreational marijuana

By Marina Villeneuve and Jennifer Peltz Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Lawmakers reached an agreement late Saturday to legalize recreational marijuana sales in New York.

At least 14 other states already allow residents to buy marijuana for recreational and not just medical use, but New York's past efforts to pass marijuana legalization have failed in recent years. Democrats who now wield a veto-proof majority in the state Legislature have made passing it a priority this year, and Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration has estimated legalization could eventually bring the state about \$350 million annually.

"My goal in carrying this legislation has always been to end the racially disparate enforcement of marijuana prohibition that has taken such a toll on communities of color across our state, and to use the economic windfall of legalization to help heal and repair those same communities," Sen. Liz Krueger, Senate sponsor of the bill and chair of the Senate's finance committee, said.

The legislation would allow recreational marijuana sales to adults over the age of 21, and set up a licensing process for the delivery of cannabis products to customers. Individual New Yorkers could grow up to three mature and three immature plants for personal consumption, and local governments could opt out of retail sales.

The legislation would take effect immediately if passed, though sales wouldn't start immediately as New York sets up rules and a proposed cannabis board. Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes estimated Friday it could take 18 months to two years for sales to start.

Adam Goers, a vice president of Columbia Care, a New York medical marijuana provider that's interested in getting into the recreational market, said New York's proposed system would "ensure newcom-



FILE - In this Dec. 13, 2017, file photo, James MacWilliams prunes a marijuana plant that he is growing indoors in Portland, Maine. New York has failed in recent years to pass marijuana legalization, but a state senator said lawmakers have reached an agreement to legalize marijuana sales to adults over the age of 21. (AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty, File)

ers have a crack at the marketplace" alongside the state's existing medical marijuana providers.

"There's a big pie in which a lot of different folks are going to be able to be a part of it," Goers said.

New York would set a 9% sales tax on cannabis, plus an additional 4% tax split between the county and local government. It would also impose an additional tax based on the level of THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, ranging from 0.5 cents per milligram for flower to 3 cents per milligram for edibles.

New York would eliminate penalties for possession of less than three ounces of cannabis, and automatically expunge records of people with past convictions for marijuana-related offenses that would no longer be criminalized. That's a step beyond a 2019 law that expunged many past convictions for marijuana possession and reduced the penalty for possessing small amounts.

And New York would provide loans, grants and incubator programs to encourage participation in the cannabis industry by people from minority communities, as well as small

farmers, women and disabled veterans.

Proponents have said the move could create thousands of jobs and begin to address the racial injustice of a decades-long drug war that disproportionately targeted minority and poor communities.

"Police, prosecutors, child services and ICE have used criminalization as a weapon against them, and the impact this bill will have on the lives of our oversupervised clients cannot be overstated," Alice Fontier, managing director of Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, said in a statement Saturday.

New York's Legal Aid Society also hailed the agreement. "This landmark legislation brings justice to New York State by ending prohibition, expunging conviction records that have curtailed the opportunities of countless predominately young Black and Latinx New Yorkers, and delivers economic justice to ensure that communities who have suffered the brunt of aggressive and disparate marijuana enforcement are first in line to reap the economic gain," the group said in a news release Sunday. Melissa Moore, the Drug Policy Al-

liance's director for New York state, said the bill "really puts a nail in the coffin of the drug war that's been so devastating to communities across New York, and puts in place comprehensive policies that are really grounded in community re-investment."

Cuomo has pointed to growing acceptance of legalization in the Northeast, including in Massachusetts, Maine and most recently, New Jersey.

Past efforts to legalize recreational use have been hurt by a lack of support from suburban Democrats, disagreements over how to distribute marijuana sales tax revenue and questions over how to address drivers suspected of driving high. It also has run into opposition from law enforcement, school and community advocates, who warn legalization would further strain a health care system already overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic and send mixed messages to young people.

"We are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the serious crisis of youth vaping and the continuing opioid epidemic, this harmful legislation is counterintuitive," said

an open letter signed by the Medical Society of the State of NY, New York State Parent Teacher Association, New York Sheriff's Association and several other organizations March 11.

New York officials plan to launch an education and prevention campaign aimed at reducing the risk of cannabis among school-aged children, and schools could get grants for anti-vaping and drug prevention and awareness programs.

And the state will also launch a study due by Dec. 31, 2022, that examines the extent that cannabis impairs driving, and whether it depends on factors like time and metabolism.

"One of the things that no country in the world has and everybody wants is a way to quickly and easily figure out if someone's high or impaired on cannabis," University of Buffalo psychologist and professor of community health and health behavior R. Lorraine Collins said. "Research is being done to find systems that can do that. But I think those efforts will not come to fruition for awhile."

The bill also sets aside revenues to cover the costs of everything from regulating marijuana, to substance abuse prevention.

State police could also get funding to hire and train more so-called "drug recognition experts."

But there's no evidence that drug recognition experts can tell whether someone is high or not, according to Collins, who was appointed to Cuomo's 2018 working group tasked with drafting cannabis regulations.

"I think it's very important that we approach that challenge using science and research and not wishes or unsubstantiated claims," Collins said.

Collins pointed to a 2020 report from the American Civil Liberties Union that found that Blacks are almost four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession compared to Whites, based on FBI statistics. □

2 in Seattle, San Francisco face anti-Asian hate charges

By Daisy Nguyen Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)

— Prosecutors in Seattle and San Francisco have charged men with hate crimes in separate incidents that authorities say targeted people of Asian descent amid a wave of high-profile and sometimes deadly violence against Asian Americans since the pandemic began.

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of Los Angeles and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area on Saturday, the latest in a series of rallies in response what many said has become a troubling surge of anti-Asian sentiments.

"We can no longer accept the normalization of being treated as perpetual foreigners in this country," speaker Tammy Kim told a rally in LA's Koreatown.

At rally attended by more than 1,000 people in San Francisco's Civic Center, the city's police chief, Bill Scott, drew loud applause when he said, "Hate is the virus, and love is the vaccination."

On Friday, prosecutors in King County, Washington, charged Christopher Hamner, 51, with three counts of malicious harassment after police say he screamed profanities and threw things at cars in two incidents last week targeting women and children of Asian heritage. The Seattle Times reported Saturday.



Protestors march at a rally against Asian hate crimes past the Los Angeles Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles, Saturday, March 27, 2021. The gathered crowd demanded justice for the victims of the Atlanta spa shooting and for an end to racism, xenophobia and misogyny. The "LA vs. Hate" initiative encourages people to call 211 if they are victims or witness an incident of hate. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

In San Francisco, Victor Humberto Brown, 53, made a first court appearance after authorities say he repeatedly punched an Asian American man at a bus stop while shouting an anti-Asian slur.

Brown was initially booked on misdemeanor counts, but prosecutors recently elevated the case to a felony, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. He said in court that he has a post-traumatic stress disorder.

In Seattle, according to court documents, Hamner yelled profanities and threw things at a woman

stopped at a red light with her two children, ages 5 and 10, on March 16. Three days later, authorities say Hamner cut off another car driven by an Asian woman, yelled a profanity and the word "Asian" at her and then threw a water bottle at her car after charging at her when she pulled into a parking spot.

Hamner was being held on \$75,000 bail on Saturday. It wasn't immediately clear if Hamner, who has not yet made a court appearance, had retained an attorney or would be assigned a public defender.

In the first instance, the woman told her 10-year-old daughter to try to take a cellphone photo of the man. The woman, identified by KIRO-TV as Pamela Cole, posted about the incident on social media and a friend's husband identified Hamner as a possible suspect.

The second woman who was accosted had a dashboard camera in her vehicle that captured the license plate of the other car, which is registered to Hamner, according to court documents. The police detective investigat-

ing the case reviewed the video and determined the women's assailant "was clearly Hamner," according to the charges.

Cole, who said she identifies as part Chinese and part Malaysian, told KIRO-TV she felt like "a sitting duck" when Hamner approached her car, hitting his fists together and screaming at her to "Get out! Get out!" while spewing profanities about her Asian heritage.

"I was in complete shock. Are you talking to me?" Cole told the station.

"He jumps out the car, and he's charging at us," she said. "That was the scariest part for me."

In San Francisco, Ron Tuason, an Army veteran of Filipino, Chinese and Spanish descent, told the Chronicle he was at a bus stop in the city's Ingleside neighborhood on March 13 when Brown approached him, yelling "Get out of my country" before using a racial slur meant to denigrate Asian people. Tuason said Brown also said, "It's because of you there's a problem here."

Tuason, 56, said he believes Brown was referring to the coronavirus. Brown punched him multiple times, he said, knocking him to the ground. He suffered a black eye and a swollen cheek as a result of the attack and said he's also experiencing memory loss. □

Kentucky town rallies to restore beheaded Mother Goose

HAZARD, Ky. (AP) — A community in Kentucky is rallying to help restore an 80-year-old landmark — an oval shaped building that has a domed roof with the neck and head of a goose sticking out the front. Until last week, that is, when the

goose was beheaded by strong winds.

The owners had put up a Go Fund Me page on March 20, saying the head had moved off its foundation and couldn't be stabilized. They were raising funds to reconstruct it. Then

on Wednesday, they posted an update. The head had fallen.

The building has served as a home, a service station, a market and an inn over the years, WYMT-TV reported. Now community support in Hazard is pouring in. As of

Saturday afternoon, the Go Fund Me page had raised more than \$7,000. The Kentucky Heritage Council in Frankfort has also pledged to help out.

So has Joey McKenney, owner of the Appalachian Apparel Company.

"Last week when they were trying to raise money — they said they were having some problems with the roof and the structure and things like that — and so I just kind of started thinking at that point what we could do to kind of help raise money," he told the

station.

He came up with a T-shirt designed to look like an old newspaper clipping with the headline, "Beloved Landmark, Beheaded!" McKenney said they will split with profit on the shirt, which should mean around \$6-\$8 per shirt going to the fund to rebuild the goose. On Friday, he said he already had orders from people in 11 different states.

Phil Neace, son of former Perry County Judge-Executive Sherman Neace, called the goose's beheading "heartbreaking." □



Bangladeshi protesters clash with police during strike

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Bangladesh security forces opened fire and used tear gas Sunday to disperse thousands of protesters who were enforcing a nationwide general strike they called to denounce violence at a previous protest over a visit by India's prime minister.

At least one man was shot in Sanarpara in Narayanganj district after thousands of protesters, mostly students from Islamic schools, blocked a major highway connecting Dhaka with the southeastern port city of Chattogram, said Mohammed Zayedul Alam, the area's police superintendent.

The man was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment, he said.

Witnesses said scores of people were hurt in clashes with police, which started after protesters set fire to a number of vehicles.

Mohammed Russel, a duty official at the control room of the Fire Service and Civil Defense, said by phone that they dispatched several units of the fire fighters



Activists of Bangladesh Islamist group Hefazat-e-Islam, vandalize buses as they enforce a day-long general strike in Narayanganj, Bangladesh, Sunday, March 28, 2021. The group having a strong network of Islamic schools had called for the strike to denounce the deaths of four people in clashes with police involving the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. (AP Photo/Mahmud Hossain Opu)

after information that some passenger buses and a truck were torched.

"But our teams could not reach the scene as the protesters blocked the approaching roads," he said. Similar clashes also took place in Sarail in the eastern district of Brahman-

baria when protesters attacked the security officials, the Bengali-language Prothom Alo daily reported. It said after the clash two bullet-ridden bodies were recovered from the scene. Local police did not answer calls from AP to confirm the deaths. Security was tight

during Sunday's strike and traffic was thin on Dhaka's usually clogged streets. Authorities deployed paramilitary border guards to Dhaka to keep order. Sunday's violence followed days of tension and clashes over a visit by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi that

began Friday and ended as scheduled on Saturday. At least four people were killed and scores injured Friday in clashes between protesters and security officials. The clashes continued Saturday.

Critics accuse Modi's Hindu-nationalist party of stoking religious polarization in India and discriminating against minorities, particularly Muslims. In recent weeks, demonstrators in Muslim-majority Bangladesh had urged the Indian leader not to visit and criticized Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for inviting him.

The Islamist group Hefazat-e-Islam, which has a network of Islamic schools across Bangladesh, announced the nationwide general strike for Sunday, to protest Friday's events, in which its members were blamed for attacking government structures.

The main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party headed by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, an archrival of Hasina, did not support Sunday's strike directly, but said the call for it was logical. □

Paris doctors warn of catastrophic overload of virus cases

PARIS (AP) — Critical care doctors in Paris say surging coronavirus infections could soon overwhelm their ability to care for the sick in the French capital's hospitals, possibly forcing them to choose which patients they have the resources to treat.

The sobering warning was delivered Sunday in a newspaper opinion signed by 41 Paris-region doctors. Published by Le Journal du Dimanche newspaper, it comes as French President Emmanuel Macron has been vigorously defending his decision not to completely lockdown France again as he did last year. Since January, Macron's government has instead imposed a nationwide overnight curfew and followed that with a grab-bag of other restrictions.

But with infections soaring and hospitals increasingly

running short of intensive care beds, doctors have been stepping up the pressure for a full French lockdown.

The Paris-region doctors who wrote in Le Journal du Dimanche said: "We have never known such a situation, even during the worst (terror) attacks" that targeted the French capital, notably assaults by Islamic State extremists in 2015 that killed 130 people and filled Paris emergency wards with the wounded.

The doctors predicted that softer new restrictions imposed this month on Paris and some other regions won't quickly bring the resurgent epidemic under control. They warned that hospital resources won't be able to keep pace with needs, forcing them to practice "catastrophe medicine" in the coming weeks as cases peak.

"We already know that our capacity to offer care will be overwhelmed," they wrote. "We will be obliged to triage patients in order to save as many lives as possible. This triage will concern all patients, with and without COVID, in particular for adult patients' access to critical care."

Macron remains adamant that not locking France down again this year, like some other European countries, was sound, even as more than 2,000 deaths per week push the country ever closer to the milestone of 100,000 people lost to the pandemic. The country now counts more than 94,400 dead.

"We were right not to implement a lockdown in France at the end of January because we didn't have the explosion of cases that every model predicted," Macron said last week. "There



FILE- In this March 19, 2021, file photo, a nurse tends to a patient affected by COVID-19 virus in the ICU unit at the Ambroise Pare clinic in Neuilly-sur-Seine, near Paris. France's president say he has nothing to be sorry about for refusing to impose a third virus lockdown earlier this year, even though his country is now facing surging infections that are straining hospitals and more than 1,000 people with the virus are dying every week. (AP Photo/Thibault Camus, File)

won't be a mea culpa from me. I don't have remorse

and won't acknowledge failure." □

Mexico's real COVID-19 death toll now stands at over 321,000

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's government acknowledged Saturday that the country's true death toll from the coronavirus pandemic now stands above 321,000, almost 60% more than the official test-confirmed number of 201,429. Mexico does little testing, and because hospitals were overwhelmed, many Mexicans died at home without getting a test. The only way to get a clear picture is to review "excess deaths" and review death certificates. On Saturday, the government quietly published such a report, which found there were 294,287 deaths linked to COVID-19 from the start of the pandemic through Feb. 14. Since Feb. 15 there have been an additional 26,772 test-confirmed deaths. The higher toll would rival that of Brazil, which currently has the world's second-highest number of deaths after the United States. But



FILE - In this June 24, 2020 file photo, crematorium workers burn the coffins that contained the remains of people who died from the coronavirus after their cremation at the San Nicolas Tolentino cemetery in the Iztapalapa neighborhood of Mexico City. As Mexico approaches 200,000 in officially test-confirmed deaths from COVID-19, the real death toll is probably higher due to the country's extremely low rate of testing. (AP Photo/Marco Ugarte, File)

Mexico's population of 126 million is far smaller than either of those countries. The new report also confirms just how deadly Mex-

ico's second wave in January was. As of the end of December, excess death estimates suggested a total of about 220,000 deaths re-

lated to COVID-19 in Mexico. That number jumped by around 75,000 in just a month and a half. Also suggestive were the

overall number of "excess deaths" since the pandemic began, around 417,000. Excess deaths are determined by comparing the deaths in a given year to those that would be expected based on data from previous years.

A review of death certificates found about 70.5% of the excess deaths were COVID-19 related, often because it was listed on the certificates as a suspected or contributing cause of death. But some experts say COVID-19 may have contributed to many of the other excess deaths because many people couldn't get treatment for other diseases because hospitals were overwhelmed.

Former President Felipe Calderón wrote in his Twitter account Saturday that "more than 400,000 Mexicans have died, above the average for previous years ... probably the highest figure in the world." □

Myanmar protests continue a day after more than 100 killed



Anti-coup protesters take positions behind their makeshift barricade in a protest in Yangon, Myanmar, Sunday, March 28, 2021. Protesters in Myanmar returned to the streets Sunday to press their demands for a return to democracy, just a day after security forces killed more than 100 people in the bloodiest day since last month's military coup. (AP Photo)

YANGON, Myanmar (AP) — Protesters in Myanmar returned to the streets Sunday to press their demands for a return to democracy, just a day after security forces killed more than 100 people in the bloodiest day since last month's military coup. Protests were held in Yangon and Mandalay, the country's two biggest cities, as well as elsewhere.

Some of the demonstrations were again met with police force. At least 114 people were killed Saturday as security forces cracked down on protests against the Feb. 1 coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government, according to the online news service Myanmar Now. The reported fatalities included several children under 16 years old.

Similar tallies of the death toll were issued by other Myanmar media and researchers, far exceeding the previous highest death toll on March 14. The number of killings since the coup is now more than 420, according to multiple counts. The coup reversed years of progress toward democracy after five decades of military rule and has again made Myanmar the focus of international scrutiny. The Saturday killings by police and soldiers took place throughout the country as Myanmar's military celebrated the annual Armed Forces Day holiday with a parade in the country's capital, Naypyitaw. The bloodshed quickly drew international condemnation, both from diplomatic missions within Myanmar and from abroad. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was shocked by the killings of civilians, including children. "The continuing military crackdown is unacceptable and demands a firm, unified & resolute interna-

tional response," he wrote on Twitter. In the United States, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a tweet that his country was "horrified by the bloodshed perpetrated by Burmese security forces, showing that the junta will sacrifice the lives of the people to serve the few." The military chiefs of 12 nations issued a joint statement condemning the use of force against unarmed people. "A professional military follows international standards for conduct and is responsible for protecting — not harming — the people it serves," it said. "We urge the Myanmar Armed Forces to cease violence and work to restore respect and credibility with the people of Myanmar that it has lost through its actions." The statement was issued by the defense chiefs of Australia, Canada, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States. The human rights group

Amnesty International revived criticism that the international community was not doing enough to end the state violence in Myanmar. "U.N. Security Council member states' continued refusal to meaningfully act against this never-ending horror is contemptible," said Ming Yu Hah, the organization's deputy regional director for campaigns. The Security Council has condemned the violence but not advocated concerted action against the junta, such as a ban on selling it arms. China and Russia are both major arms suppliers to Myanmar's military as well as politically sympathetic, and as members of the council would almost certainly veto any such move. In recent days the junta has portrayed the demonstrators as the ones perpetrating violence for their sporadic use of Molotov cocktails. On Saturday, some protesters in Yangon were seen carrying bows and arrows. □

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Suicide bomb hits Palm Sunday Mass in Indonesia, 20 wounded

MAKASSAR, Indonesia (AP)

—Two attackers blew themselves up outside a packed Roman Catholic cathedral during a Palm Sunday Mass on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, wounding at least 20 people, police said.

A video obtained by The Associated Press showed body parts scattered near a burning motorbike at the gates of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral in Makassar, the capital of South Sulawesi province.

Rev. Wilhelmus Tulak, a priest at the church, said he had just finished celebrating Palm Sunday Mass when a loud bang shocked his congregation. He said the blast went off at about 10:30 a.m. as a first batch of churchgoers was walking out of the church and another group was coming in.

He said security guards at the church were suspicious of two men on a motorcycle who wanted to enter the building and when they went to confront them, one of the men detonated his explosives.

Police later said both attackers were killed instantly and evidence collected at the scene indicated one of the two was a woman. The wounded included four guards and several churchgoers, police said.

The attack a week before Easter in the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation came as the country was on high alert following December's arrest of the leader of the Southeast Asian militant group, Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been designated a terror group by many nations.

Indonesia has been battling militants since bombings on the resort island of Bali in 2002 killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists. Attacks aimed at foreign-

ers have been largely replaced in recent years by smaller, less deadly strikes targeting the government, police and anti-terrorism forces and people militants consider as infidels.

President Joko Widodo condemned Sunday's attack and said it has nothing to do with any religion as all religions would not tolerate any kind of terrorism.

"I call on people to remain calm while worshipping because the state guarantees you can worship without fear," Widodo said in a televised address.

He offered his prayers to those injured and said the government would cover all costs of medical treatment. He said he had ordered the national police chief to investigate the attack and crack down on any militant network that may be involved.

At the end of Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, which opened Holy Week ceremonies at the Vatican, Pope Francis invited prayers for the victims of violence. He cited in particular "those of the attack that took place this morning in Indonesia, in front of the Cathedral of Makassar."

At least 20 people were wounded in the attack and had been admitted to hospitals for treatment, said Mohammad Mahfud, the coordinating minister for political, legal and security affairs.

"The perpetrators or terrorist groups behind this attack will continue to be pursued," Mahfud said.

Indonesia's National Police spokesperson Argo Yuwono said police were still trying to identify the two attackers on the motorbike and whether they were linked to a local affiliate of the banned Jemaah Islamiyah network or were acting

independently.

Indonesian forces in December arrested the group's leader Aris Sumarsono, also known as Zulkarnaen. Over the past month the country's counterterrorism squad has arrested about 64 suspects, including 19 in Makassar, following a tipoff about possible attacks against police and places of worship.

While Jemaah Islamiyah has been weakened over the past decade by a sustained crackdown, in recent years a new threat has emerged in militants who fought with the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria and returned to Indonesia or those inspired by the group's attacks abroad.

Indonesia's last major attack was in May 2018, when



Police officer and rescue workers carry a body bag containing what is believed to be human remains outside a church where an explosion went off in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, Sunday, March 28, 2021. A suicide bomber blew himself up outside a packed Roman Catholic cathedral on Indonesia's Sulawesi island during a Palm Sunday Mass, wounding a number of people, police said. (AP Photo/Masyudi S. Firmansyah)

two families carried out a series of suicide bombings on churches in the second-largest city of Surabaya, kill-

ing a dozen people including two young girls whose parents had involved them in one of the attacks. □

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The general Fit2Fly COVID-19 Testing Centers are located at the Cove Mall and at the Mill Resort, two locations at a stone's throw from your resort, condominium, or other vacation accommodation. Contact them to make an appointment, or just walk-in when it is convenient to you. It is recommended that the tests are done timely, as the negative test is only accepted if taken up to three days before boarding your flight. MedCare Fit2Fly Testing Center at the Cove Mall is opposite the Holiday Inn and is open every day for walk-ins from 8am through 10pm. MedCare's other location is situated at The Mill Resort, across the street from the RIU Hotel and is open every day from 8:30am until 12:30pm. Naturally, if you wish to arrange an appointment for your tests before coming to Aruba this is also possible by contacting us.



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Management by Innovation in the Caribbean

by Cdr. Bud Slabbaert

We have a challenge on our hands but being able to handle a challenge creates strength. Employment is needed for a healthy economy since it creates buying power and enables us to afford the things we want. We also need to create a brain-gain, whereby well-educated Caribbeans return home and bring the expertise and knowledge that we need. We need a unique global sustainable industry development with a secure return of investment!

My suggestion is to develop large floating platforms. Why not grow coffee beans? Because coffee beans are a commodity. People on the land pick the beans and some others do the packaging. They work hard but make little money. Brokers and speculators on commodity markets abroad are making the big money. Producing commodities doesn't create talent; no skills needed, thus no specialized teachers needed. Forget commodities. We need something specialized, highly valued and significantly priced whereby we can deal and negotiate directly with the client. It should be made in the Caribbean. It should involve employees from all levels of educational backgrounds. It should inspire young people and open training opportunities. You may think that building large floating platforms or even mega-platforms is the idea of a dreamer or someone from a different planet, for one because the Caribbean does not have mega-space for building mega platforms.

Nothing that is mega, is built out of one piece. There is an option to build in modules; the more modules attached to each other, the more mega a structure becomes. No accurate cell count has been done but estimates of the number of cells in a human body vary from five to 68 trillion. A trillion is 1,000,000,000,000. Even when you were born and your mama held you in her arms, you were already a bundle of 1-5 trillion cells. I'm thinking of a float that consists of only



20-400 modules. It will take more individual parts and components to put float together for a particular function. An Airbus 380 is constructed of approximately 'only' three million (3,000,000) parts. Major structural sections are built in France, Germany, Spain, and the UK and are done in sixteen cities with accessories that are imported from various parts of the world. Eventually, the A380 is assembled in one location.

The Wright Brothers ran a bicycle shop and built the first flying gadget that was called an aircraft. Imagine in their day and age if they had suggested that future planes will be built out of 3 million parts and carrying more than 800 passengers, they would have confined the Bro's at "Happy Acres" and fed them three times daily with a teaspoon. My point is not to put limitations on what can or cannot be done. If construction is done modular, how can the modules be brought to other Carib-

bean islands? If it is a floating component, use a tugboat! And if it should go beyond the Caribbean, then what? How do most imports come to the Caribbean? By container ship! So, what is the option to export our modules? When built in container size sections, they can be shipped from the Caribbean all over the world. At their destination port they can even be loaded on truck or train and become a floating solution in land locked lakes. It will take Caribbean engineers to travel abroad and supervise the assembly.

Who is going to figure that all out? In a human body there is a department on the top floor called the brain. For our project we are going to create something similar, and we will call it 'Research and Development Center'. Isn't that what the brain does: observe, find out, react, and act? To put our brain together we need the equivalence of neurons. Specialists will become our 'neurons'. Where will we find

them? There are some exceptionally talented people in the Caribbean. If they are willing and able to subscribe to the mission and vision of the project and they have the passion and creativity to turn challenges into opportunities and further into results, they may be just the right people. There are well educated Caribbeans in various parts of the world who may want to return and contribute with the knowledge and experience they have acquired abroad. To make it complete, we also need the talents from non-Caribbean. They may be our guests for a short time; we may like them so much that we want to hold on to them a bit longer. Once we have the highly intelligent human resources on board, we can start training others in our community. It is not going to happen in a wink. Call it a plan for now but, the sooner the initiative is started, the sooner results will come.

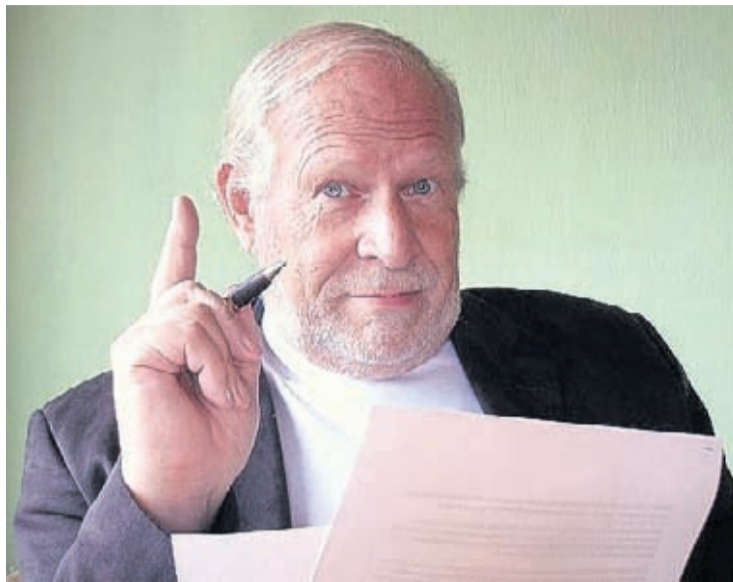
Continued on Page 10

Management by Innovation in the Caribbean

Continued from Page 9

"Why would I want to invest in the Caribbean?" Was the question how the story started? Either you are closing your eyes to a situation you don't wish to acknowledge or, you are not aware of the caliber of opportunity that is growing here. We are in the process of growing 'Human Capital'. I put 'Human Capital' in the category of 'Own Capital'. Own capital funds are generally a condition for outside financiers. Without sufficient responsible own capital resources, outside capital givers are not ready for a payment. With the Research and Development Center we are creating a vault of 'Own Human Capital'. Great, now we've a group of geeks restrained in a room and call it our brain center. What enlightenment are we confronted with next?

Whether building floats in one piece, modules, or container sized segments, where will it be done? A wharf is needed. It doesn't



have to be huge if things are built in modules. It requires engineers, but we cannot have all Chiefs and no Indians, so, we need jacks of different trades which means that there will be new employment opportunities of various kinds. I have made impact studies in the past; trying to put a figure on the socio-economic impact that activities of an operation have. It's difficult if there is no operation yet. One can do some guessing that is so intelligent that it becomes quite realistic. Just

some brief points here. Additional employment creates more buying power. A new industry means that suppliers and service providers are needed. Some of those services will be developed by entrepreneurs of the island. We develop a unique global industry; due to the uniqueness, companies from abroad may wish to be closer to the action and set up a representation. That is what is called cluster development and those clusters also have a socio-economic impact. They are amplifiers, pump-

ing more decibels in an existing composition.

I invented the expression 'Management by Innovation' since it wasn't found yet in MBA-coursework. It is my concept by which management aims to develop and maintain a leadership position in the market by actively looking for new ways and questioning existing ways internally and externally. It is totally different than 'Management by Numbers' which I consider to be 'Management for the Ruthless' and utterly unintelligent. I see it as the most effective way to get rid of the most brilliant and dedicated minds. The result of managing a business by the numbers is that engagement, creativity, and innovation get lost. It looks for saturation, like consuming large portions of fattening food and becoming obese. It is about

out-proportioning to gain weight. It may be a great concept for managing a Japanese Sumo wrestling team but let it be known that the life expectancy of a Sumo is at least 10 years shorter than the average Japanese male. They develop diabetes, high blood pressure, and are prone to heart attacks. The stress on their joints causes arthritis.

With the intelligent concept of 'Management by Innovation', I dare to say that the Caribbean could become a hub of science and technology. "Gosh. If we are becoming so freaking smart, maybe we can do more with it," you might think. Yes, you can hold intellectual property rights and get royalty payments from newly developed technologies and innovations, while enjoying being with your family in the Caribbean. □



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Endangered animals: Gorillas

By Bhavi Mirchandani

ORANJESTAD — Aruba today would like to share with you a final research paper made by Bhavi Mirchandani, who is a 2nd grade student at the International School of Aruba and wants to shed some light on these wonderful animals.

My Final Research Paper
Endangered Animals: Gorillas

"I will be telling you facts about an endangered animal today. My endangered animal is a gorilla. I think gorillas are strong and fierce. Gorillas enjoy eating fruit. Gorillas are hairy. They have black fur. Baby gorillas are cute and moms give birth to one baby every four years. Gorillas are nice animals. You can help save this animal by not poaching or killing it. These are the facts about an endangered animal. Thank you for reading." □



In Minneapolis, an immigrant street struggles to recover

By Tim Sullivan

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) —

Nearly all the wreckage along Lake Street has been hauled away. The fire-swept buildings have been torn down or repaired. The police station is empty, its entryway sealed with stacked concrete blocks like a street corner pharaoh's tomb.

The street, the focus of so much violence when protests raged through Minneapolis after George Floyd died in police custody, looks almost normal in places.

Supermercado Morelia is again selling pickled cactus slices and two dozen varieties of Mexican cookies. At the Dur Dur grocery store, they're back to offering goat meat, rice in 20-pound bags and cheap money transfers to East Africa. Hufan Restaurant Cafe is trumpeting "the best Somali and American cuisine." The drive-thru at Pop-eyes is open every night until 11.

But look again, because plenty has also changed along Lake Street, a beacon for immigrants for more than a century.

The heart of the miles-long commercial and cultural corridor is struggling to recover. Politicians are bickering about rebuilding funds, crime is up across the city and the corridor is bracing for more protests as a former police officer goes on trial Monday in Floyd's death. And even when Minnesota's notorious winter surrendered recently to sunny, spring-like weather, the sidewalks in the hardest-hit neighborhoods remained quiet.

"There's a void," said Chris Montana, founder of one of America's few Black-owned micro-distilleries, Du Nord Craft Spirits, whose nearby warehouse was ransacked and set on fire during the protests. "You walk up and down Lake Street right now, the only signs of progress are that the piles of rubble have been replaced by empty fields."

At LV's Barber Shop, the door is locked, and the



Pinky Patel, who immigrated from India and whose family owns Elite Cleaners, works March 25, 2021, at her business down the street from the destroyed 3rd Precinct police station in Minneapolis. Looters stripped the shop of clothing and set fire to the equipment following the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police last May. The Lake Street Council estimates that small businesses sustained about \$250 million in uninsured damage along the corridor, from broken windows to large buildings that had to be torn down. (AP Photo/Jim Mone)

black barber chairs are layered in dust. At what was once Minnehaha Liquors, there's nothing but an old metal sign pointing to an empty lot. There's the dentist who hasn't returned to work, the bulldozed post office and the Mexican party supply store that keeps its door locked in the middle of the day because the staff is worried about crime. Lake Street cuts a long path through Minneapolis, from the upscale bars at the street's west end, through the immigrant commercial enclaves, to the leafy neighborhoods of middle-class bungalows that reach to the Mississippi River. It also cuts a path through the city's history of immigrant life and deeply embedded inequality.

Over 100 businesses and organizations, many run by immigrants or racial minorities, were destroyed or displaced when the protests turned violent, said Allyson Sharkey, executive director of the nonprofit Lake Street Council, which has channeled more than \$8 million in grants to help them. Businesses were already suffering when the riots began.

"People already had their savings wiped out by the first three months of CO-

VID, so when the property destruction hit, there just wasn't any money left to rebuild," Sharkey said.

The street's recovery has been "a mixed bag," she said, with some businesses still boarded up and some customers avoiding the area, unsure if stores have reopened.

Anger at politicians and law enforcement runs deep among business owners.

"I called 911 — no help," said Abe Demmaj, an Ethiopian immigrant whose small furniture store was nearly emptied by looters. "I called the mayor's office. I called the governor's office."

Since then, nearly all the help has come from donations and private grants.

State assistance has become mired in a stark partisan and geographic divide, with Republican legislators pushing back against Democratic Gov. Tim Walz's proposed budget, which includes \$150 million to help businesses rebuild in Minneapolis and neighboring St. Paul.

The state's Democratic House majority, with its urban support base, has mostly supported Walz's plan. But rural Minnesota is overwhelmingly Republican, and the GOP's Sen-

ate majority has opposed anything that smacks of a bailout of Minneapolis. Republican leaders blame the damage on Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, another Democrat, saying they did not end the riots quickly enough.

The Lake Street Council estimates that small businesses sustained about \$250 million in uninsured damage along the corridor, from broken windows to large buildings that had to be torn down.

"The big fish can survive without help," said Pinky Patel, whose family dry cleaning business was looted and partially burned and did not have enough insurance. "For us, it's a problem."

Violence flared for days after the May 25 death of Floyd, a Black man who pleaded that he couldn't breathe as officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee against Floyd's neck for about nine minutes during an arrest.

Captured on video by a bystander, the arrest set off waves of protests across the country and fueled a national reckoning on racial justice.

Chauvin, who is on trial on murder charges, worked out of the department's

3rd Precinct, a Lake Street fixture that quickly became a target of rioters. Police eventually abandoned the station as protesters took it over and set parts on fire.

The station is in the heart of Lake Street's working-class immigrant neighborhoods, where race and ethnicity and language jumble together.

"Here, everyone is welcome," said Patel, who immigrated from India. "Whatever language you speak, you're accepted. And you'll find at least one person who will be able to speak to you."

The neighborhoods have been welcoming immigrants for more than a century, since newly arrived Norwegians, Germans and Swedes did the shopping on Lake Street. When some neighborhoods fell into poverty in the 1970s and '80s, leaving a grid of cheap stores and empty buildings, new waves of immigrants brought them back.

First came the Somalis and Ethiopians fleeing war and poverty. Then came Latinos, many from Mexico. Immigrant entrepreneurs forged middle-class lives serving their working-class neighbors, who could not afford the stores in Lake Street's more exclusive neighborhoods.

"Immigrants made this community," Demmaj said. "If you wanted to be an entrepreneur, this was the place to build something: restaurants, day cares, stores."

Over the past couple of decades, the neighborhood has become home to war refugees and hipsters, Somali restaurants and small nightclubs. You can now get \$3,000 bicycles along Lake Street's immigrant corridor and 10-pound bags of Mexican candy to fill party pinatas (complete with warnings — in Spanish and English — to brush your teeth afterward).

Many hope the end of Chauvin's trial will mark the beginning of the real recovery. A conviction, many here believe, is a foregone conclusion. □

'Treating us like robots': Amazon workers seek union

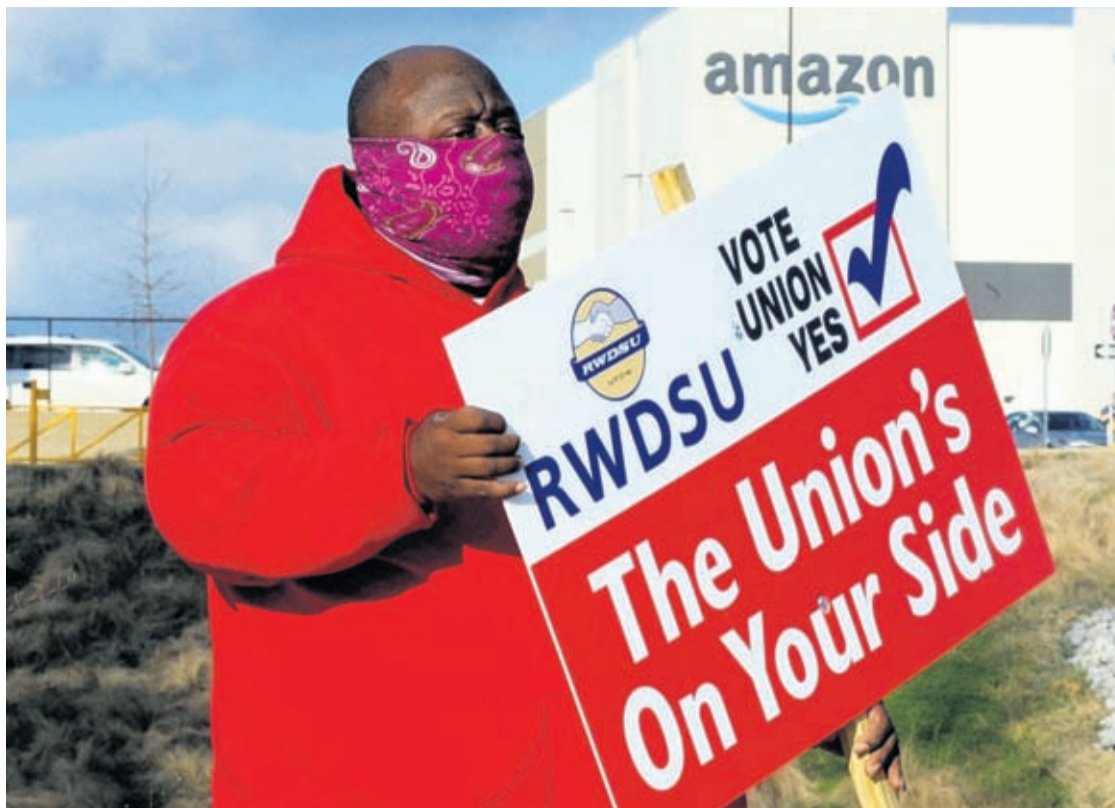
By Kim Chandler

BESSEMER, Ala. (AP) — Linda Burns was excited at first to land a job at the Amazon warehouse outside Birmingham, Alabama. The former nursing assistant had always enjoyed ordering from the company. Now, she would be working for them.

A cog in a fast-moving assembly line, her job involved picking up customers' orders and sending them down the line to the packers. Now she is a staunch supporter of getting a union at the Bessemer facility. She said employees face relentless quotas and deserve more respect.

"They are treating us like robots rather than humans," said Burns, 51, who said she is out of leave after developing tendonitis.

This week, Amazon workers and union advocates, including Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, made a last-minute push as voting comes to a close in the high-stakes union battle. If organizers are successful, it could lead to a chain reaction of other unionization pushes at Amazon facilities. If voted down, it would be another loss for organizers hoping to win a rare labor victory in the Deep South. Amazon is fighting the union. The company argues the warehouse created thousands of jobs with an average pay of \$15.30



FILE - In this Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021, file photo, Michael Foster of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union holds a sign outside an Amazon facility where labor is trying to organize workers in Bessemer, Ala. When Amazon found out that workers were trying to form a union, a worker said Wednesday, March 17, that the company put up signs across the warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., including in bathroom stalls. (AP Photo/Jay Reeves, File)

per hour — more than twice the minimum wage in Alabama. Workers also get benefits including health care, vision and dental insurance without paying union dues, the company said.

Sanders spoke at a union rally in Birmingham on Friday, saying a labor victory against the tech and retail giant owned by the richest person in world — and in a historically anti-union state — would resonate across the country.

"What you are doing here

is historical, historical, because all over this country people are sick and tired of being exploited, sick and tired of not having the dignity that they deserve. And your message to people all over this country is stand up and fight back," Sanders said.

"This country belongs to all of us, not just a handful of billionaires," the former Democratic presidential candidate said.

Ahead of Sanders' visit, Amazon CEO Dave Clark tweeted that they "ac-

tually deliver" a progressive workplace with a \$15 hourly minimum wage and good health benefits that Sanders said he supports.

"So, if you want to hear about \$15 an hour and health care, Senator Sanders will be speaking downtown. But if you would like to make at least \$15 an hour and have good health care, Amazon is hiring," Clark tweeted.

Burns and Harvey Wilson, a 41-year-old who works as a "picker" at Amazon, both said they're support-

ing the union because of poor working conditions at the warehouse. Employees face relentless quotas and the mammoth size of the facility makes it nearly impossible to get to the bathroom and back to your station during a workers' break time, they said.

"How could you work for somebody who is trillion, billion whatever you want to call it, how can you work for them and they don't want you to go to the bathroom?" Burns said.

Wilson said he is unsure how the vote would go because a number of younger workers are fearful they could lose benefits.

"A lot of people are scared to vote because they are afraid they are going to lose their jobs," Wilson said. Employees are seeking to be represented by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. Ballots on the vote must be returned by Monday.

The vote in Alabama comes after efforts to start unions at Southern auto plants came up short.

Emmit Ashford, a part-time Amazon worker, said that even if the vote fails, he believes the workers in Bessemer have ignited something.

"No matter what happens with this vote, the bell has been rung and it won't stop here. We will not stop fighting," Ashford said at a rally ahead of the vote. □



A Volkswagen ID.3 (l) and ID.4 stand inside a delivery tower in Wolfsburg, Germany, Friday, March 26, 2021. Volkswagen started deliveries of the all-electric SUV on 26 March 2021. (Ole Spata/dpa via AP)

BERLIN (AP) — Volkswagen is seeking damages from two former top executives for their role in the diesel

VW to seek damages from former executives for diesel scandal

emissions scandal that cost the German automaker billions of euros and a hefty dent in its reputation.

VW said after a board meeting Friday that it wants damages from ex-chief executive Martin Winterkorn and Rupert Stadler, the former head of its Audi brand, "on account of breaches of the duty of care under stock corporation law." In its statement, the company didn't specify the amount of damages it would seek.

VW said a law firm the su-

pervisory board tasked with investigating liability issues reviewed millions of documents, conducted hundreds of interviews and "concluded that negligent breaches of duty had occurred" by the two executives.

"The investigation that has now been completed was by far the most comprehensive and complex investigation carried out in a company in German economic history," Volkswagen said. The probe found that Winterkorn allegedly

"breached his duties of care (...) by failing, in the period from 27 July 2015 on, to comprehensively and promptly clarify the circumstances behind the use of unlawful software functions" in 2.0 TDI diesel engines sold in the North American market between 2009 and 2015.

"Prof. Winterkorn also failed to ensure that the questions asked by the U.S. authorities in this context were answered truthfully, completely and without delay," it said. □

Rep. Greene agrees not to block critics from Twitter account

LOS ANGELES (AP) — U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene and a Los Angeles-based political action committee have reached a settlement that bars the Georgia Republican from blocking anyone from her public Twitter account or other social media while she's in office. Greene also agreed to pay \$10,000 to cover legal fees for MeidasTouch LLC, which plans to donate the money to two nonprofit groups, according to Ben Meiselas, the PAC's co-founder and a lawyer whose clients have included former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

The deal was approved last Friday, he said. "This was a swift and impactful resolution we are proud of," Meiselas said in an email. A telephone message seeking comment from Greene's Washington, D.C., office wasn't immediately returned Thursday. However, Greene was acutely critical of the settlement in a tweet. "Because of this PAC's frivolous lawsuit against me, I'm not allowed to block people that threaten my life and my children's lives every single day on social media," she tweeted. "And they are bragging about

donating the money to organizations that want to take away my guns, so I couldn't defend myself and my children, when people show up to murder us." MeidasTouch bills itself as being "dedicated to exposing and opposing anti-democratic politicians." It has posted numerous videos, many of them excoriating former President Donald Trump, and has more than a half-million Twitter followers. □

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

	2			7		8	6	
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		3		2				9
	1		7				2	
9		8		3		6		7
	6				9		5	
5				9		4		
2			5		4			1
	3	9		6			8	

Difficulty Level ★

3/29

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5,000 attend rock concert in Barcelona after COVID-19 screen

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — If one overlooked the white face masks dotting the tightly packed crowd of music lovers, it was almost like pre-pandemic times in Barcelona's Palau Sant Jordi concert hall Saturday night.

Five thousand rock fans enjoyed a real-as-can-be concert after passing a same-day coronavirus screening, to test its effectiveness in preventing outbreaks of the virus at large cultural events.

The only rule inside the show was the strict use of the high-quality face masks provided by the concert organizers.

"We were able to evade reality for a while," said 40-year-old Jose Parejo. "We were inside our small concert bubble. And we were even able to remember back in time when things like this one were normal. Things that nowadays aren't that normal, sadly."

The show by Spanish rock group Love of Lesbian had the special permission of Spanish health authorities. While the rest of the country was limited to gatherings of no more than four people in closed spaces, the concertgoers were able to mix freely.

The musicians were also swept up in the moment. "It's been a year and half since we last set foot on a scenario as a band," sing-



People using face masks take part in a music concert in Barcelona, Spain, Saturday, March 27, 2021. Five thousand music lovers are set to attend a rock concert in Barcelona on Saturday after passing a same-day COVID-19 screening to test its effectiveness in preventing outbreaks of the virus at large cultural events. The show by Spanish rock group Love of Lesbian has the special permission of Spanish health authorities. While the rest of the country is limited to gatherings of no more than four people in closed spaces, the concertgoers will be able to mix freely while wearing face masks. (AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)

er Santi Balmes told the crowd. "This is so. ... some of the musicians are crying over here."

Ticket buyers chose between three venues in Barcelona where they could take a quick antigen test on Saturday morning. Those with negative results got a code on their cellphones validating their tickets for the 7 p.m. show.

People with heart disease, cancer, or those who have been in contact with someone infected by COVID-19 in recent weeks were asked not to sign up.

Organizers said it was the first commercial event with an audience that big held in Europe during the pandemic.

The show was sold out. The tickets, ranging from 23-28

euros (\$27-33), included the cost of the test and the face mask that was obligatory except when eating or drinking in designated areas.

The concert was backed by local authorities and by experts of Barcelona's The Fight AIDS and Infectious Diseases Foundation, which also organized a case study around a small-

er concert of 500 people in December. They said that the results of that preliminary case study showed that pre-screening with antigen tests and the use of face masks succeeded in preventing infections inside the concert despite there being no social distancing rules.

"This is another small step toward being able to hold concerts and cultural events" during the pandemic, said Dr. Boris Revollo, the virologist involved in the design of the health protocols.

In addition to being 10 times larger than the concert in December, this time there was no control group maintained outside the concert hall.

Instead, concertgoers agreed public health authorities can inform Revollo's team if they come down with the coronavirus in the weeks after the concert. With that information, Revollo's team will do an analysis of infection rates among the 5,000 concertgoers compared with that of the general population to see if there are any discrepancies that could point to contagion at the concert.

For 37-year-old Gerard Munne, it was a release. "A sensation of freedom, being able to feel the warmth of the people," he said. "(It was) yesterday's normality."□



FILE - In this Sunday, Jan. 28, 2018, file photo, Steve Johnson of Alabama Shakes accepts the best American roots performance for "Killer Diller Blues" at the 60th annual Grammy Awards at Madison Square Garden in New York. Johnson, the drummer for Grammy Award-winning rock band Alabama Shakes is in custody on child abuse charges. Johnson, 35, was arrested Wednesday, March 24, 2021, after being indicted on charges of willful torture, willful abuse and cruelly beating or otherwise willfully maltreating a child under the age of 18, news outlets reported. (Photo by Matt Sayles/Invision/AP, File)

Alabama Shakes drummer facing child abuse charges

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP) — The drummer for Grammy Award-winning rock band Alabama Shakes is in custody on child abuse charges. Steven William Johnson, 35, was arrested Wednesday after being indicted on charges of willful torture, willful abuse and cruelly beating or otherwise willfully maltreating a child under the age of 18, news outlets reported.

Johnson was taken to the Limestone County Jail. Bond was set at \$21,500.

It was not clear if Johnson has an attorney who could comment on the charges. Managers for the band did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment.

An arraignment date is set for April 7.

Johnson pleaded guilty in March 2020 to violating a domestic violence protection order in Limestone County. He received a suspended sentence of a year in jail, with 24 months on probation.

The Athens, Alabama-based band has been on hiatus since 2018, when lead singer Brittany Howard decided to focus on her solo project.□

1	2	5	9	7	3	8	6	4
6	9	7	4	1	8	2	3	5
8	4	3	6	2	5	7	1	9
3	1	4	7	5	6	9	2	8
9	5	8	2	3	1	6	4	7
7	6	2	8	4	9	1	5	3
5	8	1	3	9	2	4	7	6
2	7	6	5	8	4	3	9	1
4	3	9	1	6	7	5	8	2

Gaudreau responds with 2 assists as Flames beat Jets 4-2

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Johnny Gaudreau responded to a barb from his coach with a pair of assists for the Calgary Flames in a 4-2 win over the Winnipeg Jets on Saturday night.

Josh Leivo, Mark Giordano, Andrew Mangiapane and Sam Bennett scored for Calgary (16-17-3), which halted a four-game losing streak in the second of three straight games between the teams.

The series finale is Monday night in Calgary.

Gaudreau, who had two goals in nine games coming in, produced his first multi-point game in a month in his 500th career game.

"I've played for a long time with a lot of those guys in that locker room," Gaudreau said. "I'm sure a lot of them are really happy for me after tonight."

Following a 3-2 loss Friday to the Jets, Flames coach Darryl Sutter said Saturday morning: "Hopefully he has more energy than in his 499th game."

"I heard it," Gaudreau said. "Didn't think much of it. I've been playing hockey for 24, 25 years. I know when I haven't played well and I know when I have played well."

"Personally, it's been going up and down throughout this season. Obviously, not finding the net sometimes and stuff like that. I try to work as hard as I can each night for the 23 guys in that locker room."

Calgary is 5-5 since Sutter took over as coach on March 8.

Gaudreau played 17:05 on Saturday, second among Flames forwards behind Elias Lindholm (19:56).

"I thought his pace was better," Sutter said. "Quite honestly it was his best game since I joined the team."

"He's an elite-level player in this league, so he has to try to have his best game every game for us."

Winnipeg defenseman Logan Stanley got his first NHL goal and Mason Appleton also scored for the Jets (21-12-2), who trail Toronto by two points atop the North Division.

Playing their fourth games in six days, both clubs started their backup goalie. David Rittich made 22 saves for the win in his second start in Calgary's last 12 games.

Laurent Brossoit turned away 29 shots in the loss.

"We haven't had much puck luck at all this whole stretch," Sutter said. "When you don't have a lot of pure goal scorers, you need to get that break once in awhile and we got it."

Brossoit misplayed Bennett's shot and knocked the puck into his own net with his stick at 7:48 of the third period.

"You learn over time these guys are really proud professional athletes," Jets coach Paul Maurice said.

"You wouldn't say anything to anybody after a game. You'd wait, slap him in the pads the next time you're on the ice, have a chuckle about it and move on."

Notes: The Jets lead the 10-game season series 4-2-1.



Winnipeg Jets' Neal Pionk and Calgary Flames' Matthew Tkachuk exchange blows in front of the Jets' net during the first period of an NHL hockey game Saturday, March 27, 2021, in Calgary Alberta. (Todd Kool/The Canadian Press via AP)

... Winnipeg caps a seven-game road trip, its longest of the season, Monday at the Saddledome. ... Flames captain Mark Giordano is one point shy of 500 for his

career. ... Calgary defenseman Chris Tanev got his 100th career assist. ... The 6-foot-7, 228-pound Stanley was a first-round draft pick by the Jets in 2016. □

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Tsitsipas, with Big Three missing, makes 4th round in Miami

MIAMI (AP) — For tennis up-and-comers like Stefanos Tsitsipas, the draw at the Miami Open began to look a lot less daunting even before the tournament began.

Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer withdrew because of injuries, and Novak Djokovic decided against making the trip from his native Serbia. They stayed home with their 58 Grand Slam trophies.

"It's a first test to see how it is playing without them," Tsitsipas said after his third-round victory Saturday. "There is going to be a time in the future where this is going to be more frequent and happening more regularly, and maybe even a standard soon. So, yeah, we get a taste of how it is playing without them."

The No. 2-seeded Tsitsipas is among those with the best chance to take advantage, and he looked the part against Damir Dzumhur, winning 6-1, 6-4.

Ranked a career-high No. 5, Tsitsipas improved to 15-4 this year — and 2-3 lifetime against Dzumhur. The 22-year-old Greek used his serve to dominate Dzumhur, who never had a break point.

"I created a lot of opportunities with my serve — I wasn't rushing at all, find-



Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece returns to Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia during the Miami Open tennis tournament, Saturday, March 27, 2021, in Miami Gardens, Fla. (AP Photo/Marta Lavandier)

ing the right angles and executing it perfectly," Tsitsipas said. "Even with my second serve I felt like I did a lot of damage, not giving him a chance to press first and apply pressure with his shots."

Tsitsipas will next face No. 28 Kei Nishikori, who outlasted Aljaz Bedene 7-6 (6), 5-7, 6-4.

Two other title contenders, No. 4 Andrey Rublev and No. 6 Denis Shapovalov, advanced in night matches.

Rublev failed to convert

three match points in the final game and then had to sit for a one-hour rain delay before closing out his victory over Tennys Sandgren, 6-1, 6-2. Shapovalov also endured a rain interruption in the third set before finishing off Ilya Ivashka 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-4.

Sebastian Korda, a 20-year-old American, fueled the buzz building regarding his potential by rallying past No. 17-ranked Fabio Fognini 1-6, 6-4, 6-2. Fognini is the highest-ranked player Korda has beaten.

In women's play, top-ranked Ash Barty and three-time champion Victoria Azarenka advanced to a round of 16 showdown. Barty beat Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 6-2 and had a much easier time than in the previous round, when she saved a match point to beat qualifier Kristina Kucova. That was Barty's first match away from her native Australian since February 2020.

She kept Ostapenko on the move and on the defensive, pulling in the former

French Open champion and moving her from side to side.

Barty is the defending champion as the 2019 winner. The tournament was canceled last year at the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

The 14th-seeded Azarenka beat No. 24 Angelique Kerber 7-5, 6-2. The match was Azarenka's first this week after a bye and walkover. She won Miami in 2009, 2011 and 2016.

No. 3-seeded Simona Halep withdrew before her third-round match because of a right shoulder injury.

Wild card Ana Konjuh upset No. 15 Iga Swiatek. Konjuh's career has been slowed by four elbow surgeries, and this week she has earned her first three wins in main-draw WTA play since 2018.

"It has been frustrating the past couple of years, just having been through all these surgeries and comebacks and just never getting it right," Konjuh said. "So just to be back, you know, healthy and to compete at this level, it means a lot."

No. 5 Elina Svitolina eliminated No. 30 Ekaterina Alexandrova 7-6 (1), 6-4, and No. 7 Aryna Sabalenka ousted No. 32 Veronika Kudermetova 7-6 (4), 6-4. □

Musah tied to the US with appearance at Northern Ireland

By The Associated Press

(AP) - Midfielder Yusuf Musah was set to become tied to the United States by making his fourth international appearance in Sunday's exhibition against Northern Ireland.

Under a new FIFA rule, players under 21 may switch national association only if they play three or fewer matches under the age of 21, the U.S. Soccer Federation said. Musah, an 18-year-old with Valencia, debuted for the U.S. on Nov. 12 at Wales, then played four days later against Panama and last Thursday against Jamaica.

FIFA's previous rule would not have tied Musah

to the U.S. until he played in a competitive match, such as a World Cup qualifier, the CONCACAF Gold Cup or the CONCACAF Nations League.

U.S. coach Gregg Berhalter made four changes to his starting lineup for the friendly in Belfast, inserting Tim Ream and Matt Miazga as part of a five-man back line with Aaron Long in central defense.

Antonee Robinson started at left back, and Sergiño Dest shifted from the left to the right.

Jordan Siebatcheu got his first start after making his debut in Thursday's 4-1 win over Jamaica at

Wiener Neustadt, Austria. Kellyn Acosta moved up to forward as Josh Sargent and Sebastian Lletget moved to the bench.

Defenders John Brooks and Reggie Cannon, who started against the Reggae Boyz, returned to their clubs.

Zack Steffen was in goal, and midfielders Christian Pulisic, Gio Reyna and Musah remained in the lineup.

Pulisic captained the U.S. for the fourth time, the first since Oct. 11, 2019, against Cuba.

The lineup averaged 24 years, 116 days and 18 international appearances. □